Instructions:

Thank you for us joining today. We would like to invite you to participate in an interview that will last about 60 minutes. We are conducting an evaluation of LifeSet, and today we'd like to learn more about how the program has been operating over the last year. Specifically, we will talk about challenges and barriers the program has experienced, provider performance monitoring, and aspects of the program model among other topics. We will use this information to better understand how the LifeSet program operates and serves young adults in New Jersey.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. You can choose not to answer any question or not participate in the interview at all. There will be no consequences to you if you choose not to participate. We will keep the information you provide private and will not share it with anyone except for research staff working on the study. Additionally, federal law states that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number for this data collection is 0970-0577 and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.

Background and Role
Current position and professional experience& Main responsibilities and role within LifeSet program
Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today.
[If this is the first time interviewing this respondent] I'd like to start by learning a little bit about you.
1. What is your current position and how long have you been in it?
2. What are your main responsibilities?
3. [If held current position since before March 2020] Are these the same responsibilities you had pre-COVID? If not how did your responsibilities change?
4. How long have you worked at Youth Villages?
5. What other positions have you held at Youth Villages?
6. What role do you play as part of the LifeSet program?
7. Have you worked with former foster youth or other vulnerable youth populations before working for Youth Villages? If so, in what capacity?
8. Have you held other positions – client facing or management – in social services before? If so, what were they?
9. Is there a degree/credential or experience requirement for your position? What is it?

[If this is a follow-up interview with this respondent] First I'd like to ask about any changes you may have had in your role.
10. Has anything has changed regarding your position and main responsibilities since we last spoke on [date]?
    a. Please describe any changes that have occurred in your position.
    b. When did these changes occur?
    c. Why were these changes made?

Implementation Infrastructure
The first topic is about the challenges and supports LifeSet has experienced in New Jersey, as well as the impact of the evaluation on implementation.
Challenges, supports, and barriers

11. What challenges have you encountered implementing LifeSet? How did you overcome these challenges?
    a. [If applicable] Has Covid-19 presented any challenges in implementing LifeSet? Has it been beneficial in any way?
12. What things have helped support the implementation of LifeSet?
    a. [If still needed] For example, DCF policies, data systems or technology, coordination with partners, or funding.
13. In what ways has the New Jersey LifeSet implementation team (the regular calls with DCF and providers) affected program implementation, both positive and negative?
    a. Are there ways has it supported implementation? Are there ways it has hindered program implementation? What are some examples?

Impact of the evaluation
14. In what ways has the external evaluation by the Urban Institute impacted the way LifeSet is implemented, both positive and negative?
15. What Youth Villages resources have been required to support the external evaluation?
16. How will LifeSet's implementation in New Jersey change when the external evaluation is over?

Performance Monitoring
I'd like to understand how Youth Villages monitors the performance of agencies that provide LifeSet Services. We are defining performance monitoring broadly to include not just processes or activities but also outcome monitoring and reporting.
17. Can you describe the general performance monitoring requirements for providers of LifeSet services?
18. Are there some LifeSet providers that are more effective than others?
    a. [If yes] How do you know whether some providers are more effective?
        i. [Probes] Is this informed by data, either qualitative or quantitative?
    b. In your view, what makes those providers more effective at delivering LifeSet?

Data Systems and Use
I would like to understand what data systems maintained by Youth Villages are used by the providers in New Jersey.
19. Is there a data system you use to record information for the LifeSet program in New Jersey?
    a. Are there one or multiple data systems used? What are they called?
    b. Is it/are they specific to LifeSet or does it/do they record information for all of your cases?
    c. What type of data is in this/these system(s)? [Probes: case notes, assessments, service plans, demographics, worker activities with youth]
    d. Who is responsible for entering/tracking the information?
20. Did you make any changes to your data system since LifeSet began in New Jersey? If yes, what changes were made and when?
21. How do you use the information collected in your data system to support implementation in New Jersey?
    a. [Probe if needed] How does it inform changes to service delivery, practices, or the program model?

Program Model

We spoke about the program model and fidelity during our second site visit in June 2022. The next few questions will help to assess changes in those areas since then.

Main components

22. To your knowledge, has anything changed regarding the program's model since June 2022?
    a. [If yes] Can you please describe what has changed and why?

Fidelity

23. Do you believe LifeSet is being delivered with fidelity in New Jersey?
    a. If yes, how do you know?
    b. If no, what areas of the model are not being delivered as intended? How do you know?
24. Currently, do you know of differences in how services are delivered across the four providers?
    a. If so, please tell us about some of those differences.
    b. If not, please tell us how LifeSet is able to maintain consistency in how services are delivered.

Reflection on LifeSet Program

Lastly, I'd like to hear your thoughts on the strengths and limitations of LifeSet services in New Jersey.

Opinion of services

25. Overall, how effective do you perceive LifeSet has been at providing services to youth transitioning out of care?
    a. What are the program's major strengths? Its limitations?
26. What challenges do LifeSet youth in New Jersey continue to face after they leave the program?
    a. Is there anything you think LifeSet could be doing to better serve and meet the needs of youth? If so, what?

Closing Questions

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I have a couple closing questions.

27. Is there anything that I did not ask about that you think I should know about LifeSet or your experience?
28. Do you have any final questions for me about the study, or about the research team?